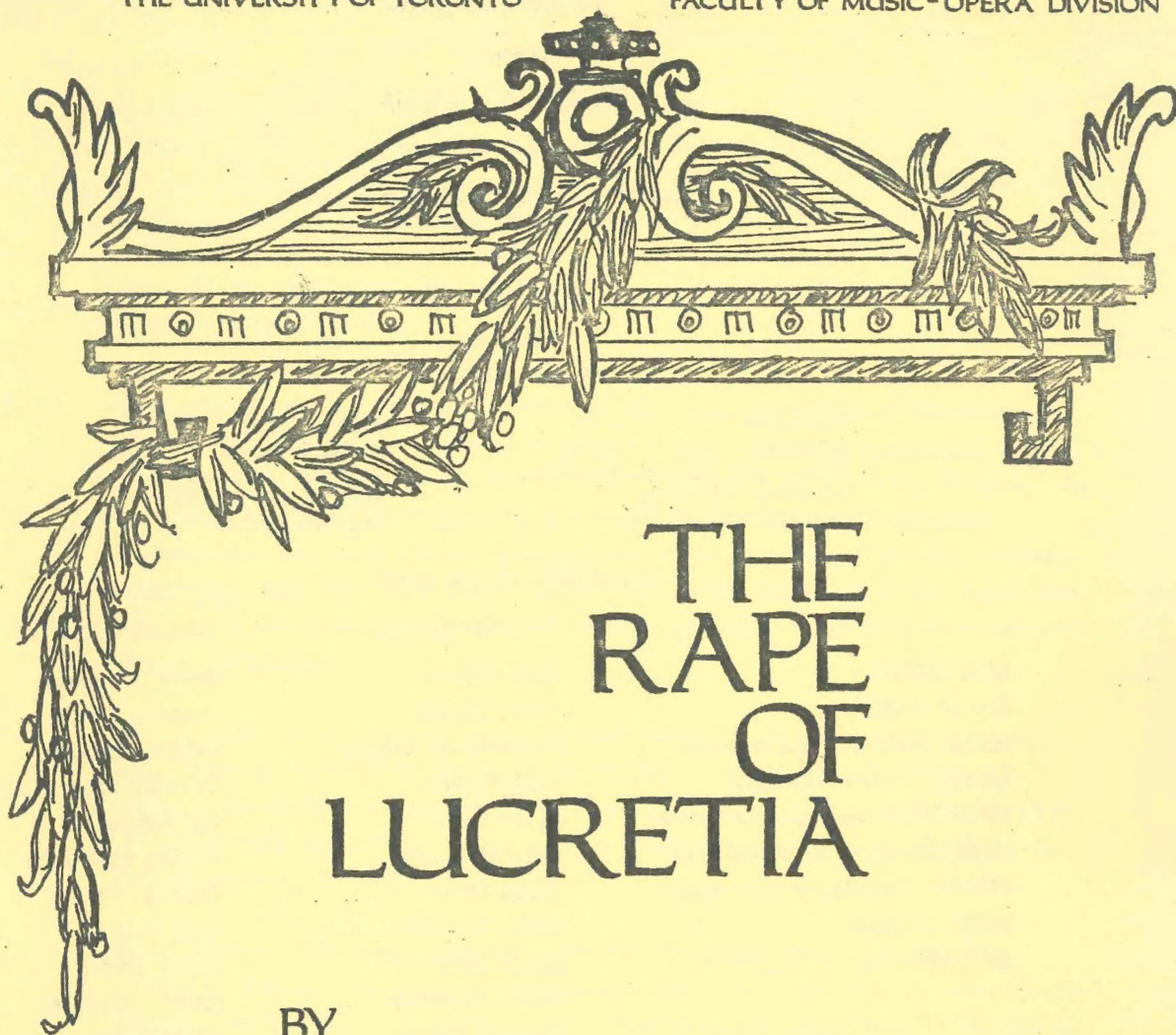


THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

FACULTY OF MUSIC-OPERA DIVISION



THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA

BY
BENJAMIN BRITTEN

DECEMBER
8, 9, 15, 16
1978
8 PM

MACMILLAN
THEATRE
EDWARD JOHNSON
BUILDING

THE OPERA DIVISION

presents

THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA

Opera in Two Acts*

Libretto after André Obey's play
Le Viol de Lucrece

by

Ronald Duncan

Music by

Benjamin Britten

Conductor

Director

Scenic and Costume Designer

Lighting Designer

Assistant Conductor

Michael Evans

Michael Albano

Brian H. Jackson

Michael Whitfield

Stephen Ralls

Characters of the Opera

	December 8, 16	December 9, 15
MALE CHORUS	Mark DuBois	Barry Stilwell
FEMALE CHORUS	Janet Coates	Frances Ginzer
COLLATINUS, a Roman General	Christopher Cameron	Robert Grenier
JUNIUS, a Roman General	Paul Massel	Timothy Cruickshank
TARQUINIUS, an Etruscan prince	Blair House	Rod Campbell
LUCRETIA, wife of Collatinus	Deborah Milsom	Lilian Kilianski
BIANCA, Lucretia's old nurse	Julia Heyer	Rosa Antony
LUCIA, a maid	Kathy Terrell	Gail Hakala
SOLDIERS	Henry Irwin	Henry Irwin
	Henri Loiselle	Henri Loiselle
	Michael Shust	Michael Shust
	Patrick Timney	Patrick Timney

There will be one intermission

*By permission of the copyright owners, Boosey & Hawkes (Canada) Ltd.

A NOTE ON THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA

Having amazed the musical world with his large scale, yet enormously detailed, portrait of Viennese life, Der Rosenkavalier, Richard Strauss broke new ground with his next opera Ariadne auf Naxos. This simplified the increasing complexity of German opera, using far fewer singers and an orchestra of chamber size. In a remarkably similar change of direction, Britten some thirty-odd years later followed the outstanding success of Peter Grimes with the development of a new genre of chamber opera.

Opera lovers familiar with Albert Herring will know the wealth of dramatic and musical invention that can come from small forces. The Rape of Lucretia predates that piece by a year, being written for performance at Glyndebourne in 1946. The two operas are alike in using an orchestra of twelve soloists, with piano accompaniment for recitatives. Lucretia has eight singers against the thirteen of Herring; but, as ever, Britten's concern for the supremacy of the voice gave scope for a series of great performances over the years, beginning with Kathleen Ferrier as Lucretia.

Like Strauss, Britten turned to a classical subject. In Ariadne the heroine's predicament is parodied by Harlequinade figures standing outside the action; in Lucretia the unusual figures of the Male and Female Choruses are featured. These two personages, with the best classical precedents, comment on the tragedy and seek to point a Christian moral.

Ronald Duncan's libretto, based on André Obey's Le Viol de Lucrèce of 1931, relates to earlier treatments by Shakespeare and Livy. The text may seem at times obscure. Rumour (which I cannot claim to have substantiated) has it that Duncan, impatient at Britten's meticulous demands, produced in retaliation a libretto of extreme intractability.

Returning to Aldeburgh a little later, he was astonished to find music already being composed with the utmost fluency to his 'impossible' text! This earliest version of the opera was heavily revised, even after the first performance, and what we now hear retains the enormous richness in imagery and allusion of the original without carrying its sometimes tiresome pedagogic overtones.

✓ In purely musical terms, the opera is an endless source of amazement. An almost Wagnerian thoroughness is shown by Britten's detailed use of themes for the leading characters; one is also struck by the wonderful sequence of musical numbers, with recitatives flowing into and out of arias and ensembles of fierce complexity or of mellifluous beauty. The culmination is in the great *passacaglia* sextet near the close which links this work not only with Britten's operatic predecessors of the nineteenth century but also with his beloved masters of the Baroque, Purcell and Bach.

Stephen Ralls

THE STORY

The action of the opera takes place in and near Rome, in 500 B.C.

ACT I, SCENE I - The Generals' tent in the camp outside Rome.

The officers discuss the outcome of their bet the night before, when they rode home unannounced to see what their wives were doing in their absence. Only Lucretia, Collatinus' wife, was found chaste. The others, including Junius' wife, were found in one compromising situation or another. Prince Tarquinius and Junius start to quarrel but are separated by Collatinus, who suggests they drink a toast together. Tarquinius proposes a toast to Lucretia whereupon Junius rushes angrily from the tent. He is furiously jealous of Lucretia's chastity and repeats her name again and again, easing his agony by abusing her. Collatinus, after trying to reason with him, goes off to bed leaving Tarquinius and Junius to resolve their differences. The two men reach agreement discussing the infidelity of woman. Junius leaves Tarquinius alone after suggesting that to prove Lucretia chaste is something even the Prince will not dare to attempt. Tarquinius looks towards Rome's distant lights and calls for his horse.

ACT I, SCENE II - A room in Lucretia's house in Rome, the same evening.

While her nurse Bianca spins, Lucretia and her maid Lucia complete the quiet domestic tasks of her household. Hearing a messenger's knock, Lucretia interrupts the tranquil scene and sends Lucia to the gate. When Lucia returns empty-handed, Lucretia realizes that in her anxiety for Collatinus' return, she has imagined the knock. The women prepare for bed when they are suddenly interrupted by a knock too loud to be imagined. Lucia unbolts the door and Prince Tarquinius enters Lucretia's house. He claims that his horse is lame and asks shelter for the night. Lucretia has no choice but to obey the imperious request even though Tarquinius' palace lies close by. As the Prince is shown to his chamber, the women bid him good-night.

ACT II, SCENE I - Lucretia's bedroom.

While Lucretia fitfully sleeps, Tarquinius steals through the house to her chamber. After observing her asleep Tarquinius kneels by her bed to kiss her. In her half-sleep she receives Tarquinius' embrace thinking him to be Collatinus. Upon awakening she is confronted with Tarquinius who is unrelenting in his implications of her repressed desires for him. Lucretia denies his accusations and begs him to go. Realizing that he cannot conquer her without violence, Tarquinius draws his sword and ravishes her.

ACT II, SCENE II - Lucretia's house, the next morning.

Lucia and Bianca arrange flowers, leaving the orchids, Collatinus' favourite flower, for Lucretia to arrange. Lucretia's trance-like entrance turns to hysteria when Bianca shows her the flowers. Giving Lucia one of the orchids, Lucretia tells her to send it to Collatinus as an entreaty to come home. Lucia departs with the message and Lucretia makes a wreath out of the remaining orchids before leaving the room. Left alone, Bianca reflects on Lucretia's state of mind and when Lucia returns, Bianca sends her to stop the messenger. It is too late: Collatinus and Junius arrive and question the women. As Collatinus learns of Tarquinius' visit to the house, Lucretia enters and painfully relates to Collatinus the cause of her sorrow. Collatinus proclaims her blameless, but unable to survive her shame, Lucretia takes her own life.

ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I
Mark Friedman*

VIOLIN II
Abigail Evans

VIOLA
Valerie Kuinka

VIOLONCELLO
Dorothy Lawson

DOUBLE BASS
Luc Michaud

FLUTE, ALTO FLUTE, PICCOLO
Jana Nelson

OBOE, COR ANGLAIS
Karen Rotenberg

CLARINET
Don Stout

BASS CLARINET
Richard Hornsby

BASSOON
Benson Bell

HORN
Mary Fearont

PERCUSSION
Michael Perry

HARP
Nora Bumanis

PIANO
George Brough

* Concert Master
† Orchestra Manager

* * * * *

NEXT OPERA PRODUCTION:

Orpheus In The Underworld (Offenbach), March 9, 10, 16, 17, 1979: 8:00 p.m.
MacMillan Theatre. Conductor, James Craig; Director, Constance Fisher;
Designer, Elsie Sawchuk. Box office opens February 12, 1979.

NEXT EVENTS:

Orford String Quartet Series, December 10, 1978, 3:00 p.m. Walter Hall.
Sunday Concert, Bach Program, January 14, 1979, 3:00 p.m. Walter Hall.

OPERA DIVISION

Co-ordinator, Constance Fisher

MUSIC STAFF

Musical Director
Coaches

James Craig
George Brough
Stephen Ralls
Sharon Krause

Michael Evans

Rehearsal Pianist

STAGE DIRECTORS

Michael Albano
Constance Fisher

Leonard Treash

TECHNICAL STAFF

Technical Director
Assistant Technical Director
Assistant to the Designer
Carpenters
Properties

Fred Perruzza
Adam P. Stewart
Kim Sisson
Ray Engelhardt, B. Dave Hillis
Ludwig Seiler

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Wardrobe Mistress/Cutter
Wardrobe Co-ordinator
Wardrobe Assistants
Lighting Board Operator
Make-up Supervisor
Make-up Assistant
Hairdressing and Wigs
Stage Crew
Technical Assistants

Deborah Osborne*
Jim Livingstone
Diane Mitchell
Kim Brown
Lindy Pole, Lucinda Zak
John Bobrel
Jack Medhurst
Martha Gleeson
Louis of Rosedale
Graham Likeness, Sandy Twose
John Bobrel, Dave MacDonnel,
Bill Penner

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Administrator
Music Co-ordinator
Librarian

Lynn Slotkin
Michael Albano
Rosa Antony

CREDITS

National Arts Centre, Canadian Staging Projects, Canadian Opera Company, Canada Manpower and Immigration, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto Musicians' Association, Jack Delworth Flowers, Graham Likeness, Andrew Oxenham, Canadian Opera Women's Committee, James Fuller, Rumble Felt Company, Kitchener, Ontario, Jim Yates, Ray Lafond, K. Reed Needles, Sheridan College, Tim Nevins, Holz-Her and Transworld Tools of Canada Ltd., Olwyn Lewis, Ron Sawyer, Anne Fleet.

* By Permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association